

New Developments In the Art of Marine Camouflage

Washington, Aug. 24.—New developments in the art of marine camouflage have effected radical changes in the painting of ships to protect them from the enemy. Modern naval warfare no longer reckons upon "invisibility," as a defensive factor, authorities having arrived at the conclusion that paint itself being dependent upon light, will not overcome shadows. "Baffle painting" has been developed as a substitute to deceive a submarine commander as to the size and form of a ship and her course and speed.

Camouflage on land still is successfully applied along the lines of protective coloring, by which guns and roads and men are made virtually invisible under screens which conditions are constantly changing and the elusive horizon always a difficult matter to deal with, similar principles were found less efficient than those which frankly admit the existence of a boat, but by peculiar color schemes offer the torpedo such a queer, deceptive target that a hit is only a matter of luck.

Lieutenant Commander Norman Wilkinson, Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve the inventor of "baffle painting," came to the conclusion after long experiment that the moment a submarine comes to the surface within striking distance, no method of painting would render a ship sufficiently invisible to escape being seen.

"There was a time," the artist says, "When I thought it possible to increase or decrease a ship's visibility. But that was before the submarine was considered as a real active factor in naval warfare."

Submarine Hydrophone.

His decision took into consideration submarine hydrophone, by which the presence of a ship, her probable size and her course can be ascertained under water. The problem therefore was resolved into rendering the ship as difficult to hit as possible and baffle painting, the only nationally accepted method of marine camouflage, was evolved.

Baffle painting is simply a project for breaking up all accepted forms of a ship by masses of strongly colors, distorting her appearance so as to destroy her general symmetry and bulk. The idea is totally to mislead the submarine. Of course some vessels so painted have been also sunk, but there are records of a far greater number at which torpedoes were fired unsuccessfully. Equally important, a much larger proportion of painted vessels which are hit by torpedoes are able to make port than ships painted gray, owing to explosion in less vulnerable parts. The aim of the submarine is thrown off by the camouflage.

Frequent reports, appearing sometimes in the newspapers, confirm the success of the system, and prove its value of defense against the submarine. The newspapers recently contained a story of an encounter between a baffle-painted freighter and a German U-boat in which the latter was rammed and sunk. The article concluded with this pertinent paragraph.

"The theory bearing on the incident held by shipping men is that the system of camouflage designed especially to elude submarines deceived the German commander. On his assumption he mistook the course held by the ship, and instead of coming to the surface at right angles to the course, got squarely in the way."

Is A Clever Story.

A clever story is told of a meeting between an excursion steamer and a vessel outward bound from an Atlantic port to dare the submarine under protection of her baffle color design. The passengers crowded the excursion steamer's side to gaze at the queer boat, which ploughed steadily forward. Apparently the camouflage steamer was heading straight for the heavily loaded pleasure boat and when a woman shrieked, panic was imminent.

"Shut up, you fool!" yelled a man who understood the principles of baffle painting. "She's heading six points off."

It was true. The camouflage had changed the aspect of the boat that she seemed to be going in a direction where she was not heading.

That is the purpose of baffle painting—to keep U-boats guessing as to whether their prey is "coming or going."

Marine camouflage is under the direction of the Navy Department, with the work executed by the Shipping Board's Department of Camouflage, headed by Henry C. Grover, of Boston.

In each district of the Shipping Board is stationed a District Camouflage, with a corps of trained men. The organization now comprises more than one hundred camouflage artists, including a number of artists of national repute. New baffle designs are continually in preparation.

In the opinion of Mr. Grover, camouflage is a decidedly disturbing factor.

"We know from valued sources that the submarine does not like our baffle painting," he observed, "Mr. Wilkinson informed me that the enemy had sketched a number of their baffle painted ships in neutral ports, but I don't think that will help them a little bit."

A school for training camouflage artists has been established by the Shipping

HENRY FORD JARS AIRPLANE EXPERTS

MUCH OF LOSING DELAY DUE TO JEALOUSY AND SELF-SEEKING GLORY.

Washington, Aug. 24.—Two large volumes of testimony taken behind closed doors during three months of investigation of aircraft production and summarized in the recent report of the senate military sub-committee were made public today by the committee.

The more important disclosures of the score of witnesses, heard in Washington and at other cities during the committee's inspection tours were outlined in the report.

Among the witnesses whose detailed statements are disclosed are John D. Ryan, chairman of the aircraft production board; Major General Kenly, chief of the army, and some navy officers, heads and engineering experts of other great automobile and airplane companies, American and foreign fliers and engineers.

Much of testimony regarded confidential—some giving new military secrets and inventions—was deleted before the testimony was given to the public. Other testimony, the report indicates, was of such a confidential nature that it was not recorded by the stenographers, who at times even were excluded from the committee hearings.

Wants One Man Authority.

In principle, Chairman Ryan approved centralization in one man of all authority over aviation affairs, while General Kenly specifically recommended a department of aviation, headed by a cabinet officer, the principal proposal of the military sub-committee. Both detailed waste of what they termed millions of dollars in the early stages of aircraft production and improvements being worked out in the reorganization. Lack of proper organization and execu-

tive direction, General Kenly said, was responsible for early delays and failures.

That the original aircraft program called for 25,000 airplane craft last July, was disclosed by General Kenly. The de Havilland four machine was conceded by General Kenly not to be satisfactory, but he said it was being perfected with every prospect of success. De Havilland's 9's he also stated are to be built in quantity, soon.

Mr. Ryan stated that Liberty motors of eight cylinders as well as twelve are being perfected and that with the Liberty motor a demonstrated success, its utility would be expanded.

General Kenly said that while the motor is successful, those in control should have built foreign planes with foreign motors of known value early in the war.

Henry Ford Testifies.

Henry Ford testified that the Liberty motor "is the best article that has ever been gotten up along that line," and stated that his factories expected to turn out 100 motors daily besides one "Eagle," or dwarf submarine chaser. "Too many engineers' jealousies and desire for personal glory, Mr. Ford said, were responsible for some aircraft difficulties. He advocated a single "boss" for aviation affairs.

How aviators have been provided with camps and fields, and trained far ahead of the production program was detailed by Colonel G. C. Edgar, construction head of the signal corps. Urgent construction of more training fields is necessary, Colonel Edgar said, as virtually all now are seriously overcrowded. Camp Kelly No. 2 at San Antonio, Texas, he said, having 4,700 men in a camp built for 2,100.

If our fighting forces consist merely of "untrained Americans," as the German press has been insisting, what's the matter with the trained German veterans that our boys have been licking?

GERMAN AIR WARFARE CONSTANTLY WEAKENS

BRITISH AVIATORS ARE TOO MANY FOR HUN—ENGLISH DESTROY THEM.

London, Friday, Aug. 23.—British air fighting on the western front during the last week provides a striking indication of the difficulty now confronting Germany in the air, which must increase in the near future as the growing air superiority of the allies makes itself felt. In the battle area, enemy scouts are compelled to operate in large

formations at a much greater height than formerly.

Severe air fighting has occurred on the front between Albert and the Amiens-Roye road, resulting, according to latest reports, in the destruction of 62 enemy machines, and the driving down of 21 airplanes out of control. Twenty-six British machines have been reported missing.

This superiority for the British has been attained without any diminution of the aerial activity on other sectors. Attacks on the Rhine provinces have been pressed with the utmost vigor.

Attila, the original Hun, was licked at the Marne, too.

Norway will eat whale fat during the war.



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